A Regional Conference on

The Responsible Society In National And International Affairs

The Arnoldshain Report 1956

Division Of Studies

World Council Of Churches

Co-Chairmen :

Sir Kenneth Grubb

Dr. Egbert de Vries

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"The Responsible Society in National and International Affairs"

1. Introduction

General Themes

The Regional Conference of July 9-14, 1956, on *The Responsible Society in National and International Affairs* held at Arnoldshain, Germany, was convened by the Division of Studies of the World Council of Churches in order to consider the bearing of certain broad themes of Christian concern upon present-day problems. These general themes had emerged at the Evanston Assembly in 1954. They were four, as follows :

> The Christian Response to the Aspirations of the Peoples for Peace, Order, Justice, Security and Freedom.
>
> Christian Responsibility for Living Together in International, Social and Economic Relations.
>
> Christian Responsibility in Relation to the State, Governments and Intergovernmental Organizations.
>
> The Common Responsibility of the West with Regard to the Problems of Standards of Living and Rapid Social Change in Asia and Africa.

Authorization

The Central Committee of the World Council in 1955 requested that a conference of churchmen from Europe, the

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United States and Canada be convened to consider subjects arising out of the Evanston Assembly in these areas of concern, and to take into account events and consultations subsequent to it. The conference was thus a regional conference, called to consider problems of a particular urgency for the region mainly involved.

The Conference

Much of the substance of the conference Report will be more meaningful if full account is taken of the composition of the conference. Scrutiny of the list of those present will reveal a substantial representation from Czechoslovakia, Hungary, East Germany, West Germany, France, Holland, Norway, Great Britain, the U.S.A. and Canada. Laymen from the fields of business, government, agriculture, labour, education and law were present, together with theologians and church leaders.

It was recognized that in the discussions, always frank and sometimes painfully so, the conference achieved, or was given, a very deep unity. Sir Kenneth Grubb, in the co-chairman's concluding statement, bore witness to the most important fact about the conference :

> "And surely I may add this. Here, at Arnoldshain we have met each other as persons, men and women, clerical and lay, from the different sides of Europe and from North America, united by a common love, however faltering, for our Lord and His Church, and a common desire to understand better some of His purposes for our troubled world. Alas ! It is only too rarely that we have been able to have meetings of this kind. Indeed, when one reflects on the unique composition of this meeting, I cannot recall anything quite parallel to it. Here men from out of the midst of vastly contrasting political backgrounds and personal situations have met together not merely to say, 'Yes, of course, we are all one in Christ Jesus', but to do something which is much harder in a world of tough realities — I mean to explore the meaning of this for some of the most intractable issues of human society and the life of the nations that any group of men can be called upon to face. Surely this personal contact in the Christian fellowship is the most significant fact about our meeting, not just because it is Christian fellowship in some vague and mystical way,

but because it has been maintained right through all our discussions. It has been expressed in the face of, and in relation to, political, economic and social problems of the kind that create the most bitter differences between men and states. We have got to know one another better because we started by trying to love one another in Christ."

The conference met in plenary session to hear addresses by Prof. John C. Bennett (U.S.A.), Prof. Josef Hromadka (Czechoslovakia), Prof. Hans Iwand (Germany), Dr. Egbert de Vries (Holland), M. René Hoffherr (France) and Mr. Charles P. Taft (U.S.A.). Plenary meetings of the conference at the end considered the reports of Groups I and II.

It was the purpose of the two groups into which the conference was divided to consider the main topics from the different perspectives of national or domestic affairs and of international affairs. As will be noted from the following reports, no attempt was made to keep the discussions in the two groups parallel. Group I on International Affairs found itself occupied with two urgent matters ; Group II covered a wider range. Some overlap of concern will be noted in the two reports. As background for the group discussion, the conference had before it papers prepared by Bishop Vetö (Hungary), Mr. Graham Hutton (England), Prof. Scheuner (Germany), the staff of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA), and Prof. Denys Munby (Scotland).

The conference was led in worship at morning and evening prayers as well as in a noonday service by Bishop Lilje (Germany), Dr. Barnes (U.S.A.) and Dr. Visser 't Hooft (Geneva).

The Report

The statements of the groups were, as already noted, considered and discussed by the full conference. But these statements, as a reading of them will show, were not of the nature of resolutions, or firm and agreed recommendations, which the full conference could be asked to accept or reject. The groups themselves, in spite of having carefully worked over and revised their statements, did not expect such action from the conference as a whole. The form of the resolution by which the conference took cognizance of the statement was, therefore, adapted to this situation. It reads :

"The Conference takes note that the groups have presented papers dealing with certain problems of international affairs (Group I) and social and economic affairs (Group II), and requests that the appropriate organs of the World Council of Churches give attention to the further pursuit of the questions raised, taking into account also the discussions of the Reports in the plenary meeting."

Action of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches

The Report of the conference was distributed to the Central Committee, and upon recommendation of the Division of Studies, the following action was taken by the Central Committee :

Agreed : that the following minute of the Division of Studies be received :

"The Division of Studies receives with gratification the Report of the Conference on 'The Responsible Society in National and International Affairs', held at Arnoldshain, Germany, July 9-14, 1956, as presented by the co-chairman of the Conference, Dr. Egbert de Vries. The Committee notes that the Conference desired to call the attention of 'appropriate organs of the World Council of Churches' to its Report. The Committee notes that the Report of Group II of the Conference was presented to the Department on Church and Society, that the Report of Group I was presented to the CCIA Executive Committee, and that the results of the Conference will be presented to the Central Committee. The Committee desires to report this minute to the Central Committee, together with an expression of its appreciation to the co-chairmen of the Conference, Dr. de Vries and Sir Kenneth Grubb."

2. Report of Group I

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Group I, on "The Responsible Society in International Affairs", brought together some thirty churchmen from Western and Eastern Europe, Britain, and North America, to discuss

some of the more urgent issues in the contemporary international situation. Problems of peace and justice, for which Christians in Europe and America have common as well as distinctive responsibilities, were given particular attention. Differing opinion as well as divergent situations were evident and frankly recognized, within the unity provided by a common loyalty to Jesus Christ, the Lord of history as well as of the Church.

Aided by past ecumenical discussions and the living fellowship, the group carried on a rather searching discussion of contrasting views. It also recognized that the conversations here begun need to be pursued by many other groups in the churches East and West, and, indeed, around the world.

1. *The unification of Germany*

Group I began its discussion with a concern for certain major points of conflict, which stand in the way of disarmament and world peace. Attention was consequently focussed on the question of Germany, as a central issue not only for Europe but for the peace of the world. The claims of justice and possibilities of a tolerable international order were seen to be involved in the German question. Progress here was regarded as important for headway towards a broader settlement, since the future of Germany is closely linked with the problems of disarmament and living together in a divided world. Also, elements in the problem of Germany were seen as common to various points of conflict.

The discussion recognized the stubborn obstacles which stand in the way of a political solution for the reunification of Germany. It was argued that reunification and free elections were impossible, except on the basis of more extensive, or at least more specific, agreements between East and West. It was also stressed that such agreements were made more difficult by the German question, for neither East nor West is willing that a united Germany of 70 million people should join the other side.

The case for a neutralized, united Germany, as an alternative to the present division, was restated. Against this argument was raised the danger of putting control of the international balance of power in the hands of a united Germany. The possibility of providing safeguards against this danger through treaty guarantees was advanced by some, but others regarded such safeguards as unsatisfactory. Further, the ques-

tion was raised whether the danger to the balance of power would not also arise from the remilitarization of one part of Germany.

The case for attempting to solve the German problem within the development of a European community, which would change the meaning of national boundaries, was also presented. Some regarded the Europe of the six countries cooperating in the Coal and Steel Community and planning for Euratom and a common market as providing a nucleus for such a European community and therefore deserving full support. Others maintained that this approach would perpetuate the present division of Germany and Europe as a whole, and therefore that the issue of European unity should be put on a larger basis, equally acceptable to nations of Western and Eastern Europe. The fear was expressed, however, that this latter approach tends to paralyse the present efforts for European integration on a more limited scale.

The development of freer cultural and economic contacts across frontiers of tension was emphasized as a longer-range importance for a solution of the German question. The expansion of ecumenical and inter-church visits and meetings, as advocated in the Evanston Appeal, was strongly supported. A stronger ecumenical fellowship, it was argued, might provide a corrective to a nationalistic conception of the unification of Germany.

The view was expressed that the paramount immediate issue is that of fundamental human rights, as freedom of conscience, freedom of education, the right of social dissent. A related thesis was that the Church everywhere must witness openly to the primacy of the law of God, within the framework of the Christian evangel.

While the discussion did not result in formal conclusions, or overcome many of the differences on the German question, three lines of approach emerged, at different levels of Christian witness, which seem promising for further exploration and action :

(i) The value of expanded contacts and consultations between churchmen from communities in tension is clear, both for the strengthening of the ecumenical fellowship and for the eventual improvement of the climate of opinion in which political decisions are made. While aware of the danger of illusions over any immediate political results from such meetings, we regard their development as a highly important task. Con-

ferences, correspondence, and exchange of literature between the churches in Western and Eastern Germany, and between these churches and those in other countries, have significance not only for the life of the churches, but also for the problem of German reunification. In this connection we call special attention to the very great importance of maintaining the organizational and, above all, the spiritual unity of the Evangelical Church in Germany. This unity acts as a bridge between the two parts of the country and also helps the member churches of the Evangelical Church in Germany to maintain their integrity and independence. Therefore the two governments concerned should allow full freedom to the Evangelical Church in Germany to fulfil these vital functions.

(ii) A second line of approach which seems promising particularly at this time, is the effort to promote the wider recognition and observance of essential human rights, as stated in the United Nations Charter and Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and emphasized in the Evanston Reports. These rights include the right to free elections, for the pre-conditions and assurance of which international agreement should be sought on provision of impartial international supervision. Steps towards the genuine recognition and safeguarding of essential freedoms would be a major contribution to the relaxation of tensions and the promotion of justice. They would create conditions for a solution to the German question.

(iii) At the level of political settlement, it seems to us clear that the aim of German reunification must take fully into account the claims of the larger communities affected by it, the European community and the nascent world community represented by the United Nations. The legitimate interests of these communities in the safeguarding of international peace and security might be protected by a peace treaty, providing for German unification, reinforced with measures for trustworthy international supervision in regard to military power. Some of the inspection proposals advanced in the disarmament discussions seem to us deserving of consideration in this connection.

The common element in these three lines of approach is the need for a greater openness, both in Germany and in East-West relations if fears, suspicions and tensions are to be sufficiently relaxed to permit a solution for the German problem. The need for greater openness in national and international affairs has equal relevance for other aspects of the international crisis. Progress in this direction seems to us essential for living together in a divided world.

2. Disarmament

The fact that our group decided to consider first of all the reunification of Germany as a major unresolved issue before the world, illustrates the predominantly held view that disarmaments is in a very real sense a by-product of a relatively stable international order. This means that substantial progress toward effective disarmament will require a reasonably open society where, on the basis of commonly recognized moral principles, a self-disciplining national society will serve to make effective such international controls as may be established. It will further require an advance in settling existing issues, as well as internationally accepted methods for peaceful settlement when new issues arise.

In this viewing disarmament as a by-product, there was no intention to minimize the importance of seriously seeking agreement on a system for the reduction and regulation of national armaments under adequate international inspection and control. In fact, it was recognized that the development of more powerful and more accurate nuclear weapons along with the prospect of a larger number of nations attaining nuclear power would with the passing of time make effective international inspection and control ever more difficult.

The discussion reckoned with a distinction between the technical factors involved in a system for the reduction and regulation of armaments and preliminary conditions which must be met in order that such a system could be fully devised and put into practice.

With respect to the technical aspects of disarmament, the group took cognizance of the complex factors which had to be reckoned with in any adequate system. Not only must provision be made in relation to men and materials, but also to strategic bases or advanced positions which a nation has on foreign soil as well as the economic potential which it could direct to military uses. Lack of time and of technical competence precluded a detailed discussion. But the danger of incomplete

solutions and superficial agreements was generally understood, and it was recognized that no system would be acceptable unless it would ensure the security equally of all nations and peoples of the world. The urgent task which is within the competence of the churches is to aid in building an informed and responsible public opinion about these matters.

Some members of our group advocated the complete international control of all the processes and materials of nuclear fission that endanger human welfare. A few members also expressed the conviction that total national disarmament would be reached only when a universally accepted authority, at present problematic, possesses the means to enforce it. But it was generally agreed that disarmament and the international order in which effective disarmament could be advanced call for a reduction and delegation of certain powers which sovereign states now hold.

If disarmament is in fact a by-product of a relatively stable international order, it seems that some time will be needed to achieve an adequate system. The discussions of the group were therefore addressed to preliminary steps which could be of immediate value in the present international situation and could also contribute to the achievement of an international regulation and reduction of national armament. We were particularly concerned with contributions which could be made by the churches, and which the churches must make if they were to meet the responsibility which attaches to Christian faith and experience in the ecumenical fellowship.

In general, it is the task of the churches to press upon governments and peoples the urgency of the situation, the moral necessity of directing human and material resources towards constructive ends, and their responsibility to cooperate fully in all endeavours to promote an international order characterized by justice and freedom. Wherever irresponsibility is manifest in the form of national or ideological pride, or of the unwarranted assertion of national interests, it should be denounced and efforts should be made to stimulate responsible action. The discussion also brought to light certain immediate specific opportunities where the churches had a contribution to make. These are mentioned here without any claim to inclusiveness and without any attempt at a full explanation.

Freedom of communication and the free exchange of persons and ideas are significant pre-conditions for the meaningful reduction of armaments. We have already mentioned the fruitful response to the Evanston appeal and we note with

appreciation the official arrangements which governments are now making to facilitate contacts between the peoples of their countries in various walks of life.

At various points in the discussion emphasis was placed upon the importance of a wider recognition and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms. While not specifically detailed, it was implied that curative and creative activities relating to economic and technical assistance, the advancement of dependent peoples to self-government or independence, and the establishment of sound trade relations would help to create conditions under which progress toward disarmament would be more readily possible.

Pending agreement on an adequate system of inspection and control, there is urgent need to find ways in which warning can be given if any nation is bent upon an aggressive act. In the discussion, reference was made to proposals offered at the Summit Conference by France, the U.S.S.R., the United Kingdom and the United States, such as the exchange of military information and military budgets, aerial inspection, observers at key ports in the territories of others, regional experimentation in military controls. Tensions could thus be further relaxed, the threat of military aggression eased, and the way paved for the kind of inspection and control which would ultimately offer the greatest security to all peoples.

The importance of efforts to promote the peaceful uses of atomic energy was stressed. As Christians we consider it the responsibility of all men to see to it that nuclear power is used solely for positive and constructive ends, with due regard for the claims of all nations for access to such sources of power as are essential for peaceful development. In considering the proposed International Atomic Energy Agency, attention was called to the dangers of unilateral and bilateral, as over against truly international arrangements, and the importance of fully utilizing the United Nations was emphasized. Certain problems common to peaceful uses of atomic energy and disarmament were noted particularly those of inspection and control. In face of the inability to identify fissionable material stockpiled for nuclear weapons and to safeguard against the diversion of nuclear power from peaceful to military uses, it was suggested that an international conference of scientists and technicians be convened to study these questions. Attention was called to the fact that the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs had already recommended the establishment by the United Nations of a commission to serve this purpose. The

view was expressed and generally supported that experiments with nuclear weapons of mass destruction should be banned and, fully recognizing the complexity as well as urgency of the problem, it was felt that the United Nations should insistently work for an agreement on cessation of such experiments in the interest of all peoples, and that the churches should continue to press for such action. A strong case was made for the view that the only alternative to effective international control — whether in disarmament or the peaceful uses of atomic energy — was increasing anarchy and the mounting threat of catastrophic destruction.

The special significance which was attached to an open society can be seen from the number of times reference thereto was made in the discussion. As put forth by various speakers, an open society requires in a domestic society, access by all people to reliable information, freedom to commend or to criticize governmental policy, the right freely to elect their government, and the self-discipline which will safeguard against arbitrary or aggressive international behaviour. From the international standpoint, the open society means that each nation shall have reasonably complete information about the actions of other nations in areas which affect its legitimate interests.

The discipline which is required both nationally and internationally so that an open society may contribute to world order must be based upon the general recognition of a common international ethos. We have noted with satisfaction that the CCIA has set up a commission to study this question.

The ends we seek can be achieved only when men sufficiently recognize an authority above governments and nations, an authority which constitutes the ground and sanction for the moral responsibility of states and peoples. For the Christian, that sovereign authority transcending all others is in God the Ruler of history and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

* * *

The Conference upon recommendation of Group I passed the following resolution :

> In view of the rapidly increasing pressures of population on the means of subsistance, and in view of the need for a clearer ecumenical position on the problem of population, we recommend that serious consideration be given to the population problem, including family planning by the appropriate agency of the WCC.

In plenary session the following points was made about the statement of Group I :

Dr. Niemöller, speaking to the section on the re-unification of Germany, stated that the whole thesis of the report was based on the pre-supposition that there was time. In his view there was no time at all and the development of separate armies in separate Germanies was a menace that needed to be taken much more seriously.

3. Report of Group II

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

PART I

A. *The Situation of Fundamental Social and Economic Change which Confronts the Church and the Individual Christian Today.*

The most important factor in our discussion and the background for our thinking about specific topics was the fact of widespread social and economic change. Change in political and social situations confronts people in every part of the world, in the West, in Asia and Africa, and in communist countries as well. Most traditional categories are inadequate for describing the situation.

Some of the dimensions of change mentioned were :

1. *spiritual and cultural* — in some areas the primary thing is the upsurge of the human spirit toward emancipation, the desire for new forms of self-realization, and self-expression ;
2. *political* — the demand for political independence in some areas and the apparent indifference to political responsibility in others challenge traditional patterns of political authority ;
3. *economic* — the world economy is interdependent in ways not always obvious to the layman. Complex economic forces are at work which have roots in past history and economic changes often produce surprising effects in distant parts of the world ;
4. *demographic* — by the year 2,000 (that is to say in 45 years) the population of the world will have increased

by at least 1,000 million, most of whom will live in Russia, Asia and Africa. In industrialized countries the percentage of older people will increase sharply. As this happens, it may well radically affect the pattern of economic and social living ;

5. *technical* — in some countries the rush of technical advance leading to the use of automation and nuclear power, may bring great changes in economic life and be a source of new social developments.

These and other aspects of social change force Christians to rethink previous conceptions of Christian social responsibility.

In our discussion there was some disagreement about the significance of this change and about the interpretation to be put upon it. How far does it represent a continuity with previous social developments ? Does it confirm or challenge particular social systems whether revolutionary or conservative ? Without being able to consider carefully all such questions, we did find that our discussions as Christians were greatly influenced by this over-arching fact of social change and development.

The tempo of outward change in some countries may not be as fast as it should be and in some countries it may be too fast. Christians must struggle to distinguish between those points where it should not. This is mainly a problem of what action will best help the right sort of change. One example relates to the rapid industrialization taking place in some parts of Asia and Africa. Unless this process is carried out in a balanced way, preventing the dangers which may arise from the uprooting of people from old sheltered communities into the atomized life of big cities, the result may be disastrous for spiritual and social life.

In all these circumstances there was general agreement that the Church must fight for freedom and justice and help people to understand and accept the responsibilities of freedom.

B. *The Way in which Present Social Change Requires Us to Think about Christian Social Responsibility.*

In a situation of fundamental change our thinking about Christian responsibility in society must consider the following points :

1. All the social systems in the countries from which we come are in flux ; all are being tested. This fact must make the Christian wary of all the old social and economic battle lines. We have to concern ourselves with the concrete situations

with which we are confronted at any time, rather than with words such as "Capitalism" and "Socialism" which may be misleading or inapplicable in a changing world. This applies also to fixed attitudes in the field of international relations.

2. This does not mean that Christians can be ethical relativists. There are eternal truths, and there are social values and traditions to be preserved. But the big problem for Christians in a time of such great change may be to avoid a "Christian" social ideology, that is, expressing in a too definite and universal way what is the meaning of Christian justice and freedom. Christians have often condemned or supported social movements without understanding their true nature and significance.

3. The great temptation to which Christians should not yield is to hold to familiar and safe structures, a "Restorationist" attitude. There was not a full discussion of what constitutes a restorationist attitude but certain evidences were mentioned. There can be no going back. No rigid ideology is helpful in a revolutionary situation. As one speaker from Eastern Europe said, Christians cannot identify themselves with new ideologies of collectivist society nor with the old ideologies of former societies. Only in the Bible can we find the true foundations for action. The Christian must also avoid apocalyptic dramatization of his fears and his hopes.

Some felt that it is impossible to discuss many of these concrete problems without a full Christian understanding of Marxist ideology and its opposition to the Christian faith. The discussions did not include this full analysis from the standpoint of the Christian faith. Some think that this is an urgent task that the churches must undertake together in the future.

With participants coming from so many different situations, the conference was compelled to discuss in a fundamental way the problem of the Biblical basis of Christian understanding of freedom and justice in our times.

C. *The Bible and Social Decisions.*

The Bible decisively illumines the minds and hearts of Christians as they face the problems of the social order. It does this because God through His revelation in the Bible frees man from fear and narrow loyalties which distort judgment. It does this because it reveals the true nature of the world under God as known in Christ and the true nature of man. When choices are most limited, and when a man needs above all courage and hope, and the realization of forgiveness, God's word

in the Bible may lead directly to the most important political decisions, for example the decision to hold fast to the conviction that Christ is Lord above every government or other earthly power. In other situations, when more possibilities are open, when men may plan for the future and work for long term constructive solutions, the Bible provides an ultimate source of judgment upon society, the general direction in which man should move, the basis for self-criticism and repentance.

It provides concrete judgments upon specific wrongs against humanity.

It enables us to see all persons as loved of God and in the light of His purpose for them.

The Bible speaks to us through the revelation of God in Christ and not through specific texts taken out of the context of that revelation. It does not provide abstract concepts or specific laws by which we know what should be done under all situations ; nor does its illumination take the place of scientific knowledge of the conditions under which we must act, or of rational analysis of the possibilities of action upon us.

A closed system of laws based upon Biblical texts can be one of the most destructive types of ideology.

The Church and all Christians need to be open to truth from all sources. They should realize that Christian teaching has often been purified by the shock of events or by interaction with secular thought, but such purification depends finally upon a clearer understanding of the meaning of the central Biblical revelation.

As we approach the specific problems of men today the Bible enables us to see the following :

It provides the basis for our understanding of the dignity of man as created in God's image. It reminds us that man was not made to be a slave of things or of institutions or of collectivities or of other men, but to be a free and responsible creature of God.

It enables us to understand sin in both economic injustice and in all systems which tend to reduce men to a subhuman existence.

God's solidarity with all men demonstrated in His becoming man in Christ is the basis for our responsibility for all our neighbours, of our responsibility to establish institutions and structures in society which are favourable to man's humanity, to just and meaningful personal relations, to responsibility in work, to the integrity of the whole life

of man, in the factory, in his family, in his community, in his Church, and in all other social relationships. In the light of the Biblical revelation we can best understand the many ways in which men become the victims of the pride and the greed of other men, often of good men who are self-deceived, and that there is no pattern of institutions, no economic system which is secure against such injustice. Whatever external changes may come about in the political and economic order, there remains the need of perpetual renewal, both of men's spirit and of their institutions.

Part II — Five Specific Aspects of Our Changing Situation

A. *The Problems of a Dynamic Society*

One of the evidences of change is the dynamic economic development taking place in many countries. But certain countries or parts of countries do not participate in this change — they stagnate. On the other hand dynamic economic life does not necessarily make for responsible society. It may be the dynamism of an ant heap. In this regard we need more satisfactory social and moral criteria for economic growth : How is it measured ? What are its goals ? Can growth be too fast ? Some of the issues to be considered are as follows :

1. There is a need for balanced development. Growth is too often measured in terms of great new industrial complexes — but we must keep in mind the need for more food and for total community advance, in housing, social services, education, etc.

2. There is a danger of fascination with spectacular mechanical or industrial change to the neglect of subtler and more important organizational and structural changes.

3. Nuclear power development is on its way but we must guard against illusions. Its use involves great capital expenditure and large amounts of technical experience and skill. Also it may not benefit underdeveloped countries as soon and as much as industrialized countries.

4. The changes should be accepted by people, not passively, but with active participation, which will be possible only if society helps to develop free and responsible personalities.

The dynamic changes in economic life raise serious problems of social organization, because they greatly affect the way

people will live in the future. We in the Church must seriously look into these questions — especially the urgent need for new ways of educating young people to live responsibly in the new mass productive, mass democratic systems.

Many current discussions of dynamic society are based on the fallacy that it is enough to have the dynamic spirit — then all will be well. The Church must think of the serious social and spiritual problems involved and in this connection many churches must revise their own approach and their own structure. They are based on a static conception of society and their own organization and methods of outreach reflect little awareness of the vital changes in society. Churches must learn how to fulfil their ministry to people in rapidly changing communities.

Various American speakers pointed to the benefits and the problems of abundance created by a dynamic economy. Among the problems mentioned especially were : the development of questionable practices of advertising and salesmanship and new attitudes of acquisitiveness. A new and dangerous kind of consumption ethics is tolerated as a necessary accompaniment of the mass production system. This is a heavy price to pay for living in a dynamic society.

B. *Areas of Rapid Social Change in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.*

In our discussion we gave special attention to areas in Asia, Africa and Latin America, where the dignity of man as a child of God is violated. Rapid economic development without adequate concern for social and ethical values leaves people bewildered. Economic development and technological change in some areas have caused other areas to decline. It may be that there is a new consciousness that conditions of living have been subhuman in the recent past or are so at present, and that such conditions in the absence of any real improvement, create the danger of dull resignation or revolt.

We are grateful for the fact that under these circumstances churches and Christians have borne witness in obedience to God. In the widespread desire for a better and fuller life, which involves rapid economic and social development, we recognize a cry for freedom and justice which must not go unheeded. Emancipation from all forms of enslavement should have the wholehearted support of Christians everywhere.

Christians who live under more favourable economic and social conditions must express in action their common humanity with all oppressed and suffering people. They must be willing,

for example, to pay higher taxes so that their governments can make their equitable contribution through loans and grants for economic developments elsewhere; and to support those economic policies of their own countries which will bring about closer international cooperation and a balanced development of other countries.

These actions must be taken with a sense of solidarity in a world which, for the first time in history, because of the nature of modern techniques, has become one world. Christians should urge their governments to take such actions not sparingly, but with a readiness to cooperate with other governments through multilateral agreements and through the United Nations and other international institutions which might lead to real common world-wide undertaking. They should urge that such assistance be given without strings.

Wherever peoples are determined to work for their own development these efforts should be supported, without imposing upon them the methods and procedures of the West, in order to increase their effectiveness and to improve the balance between the various actions taken in the field of agriculture, industry, public utilities and social services.

Voluntary agencies, including churches, can make an important contribution by an "investment in people", assisting in the training of indigenous experts and leaders in development, especially in those countries where there may be narrow limits to the amounts of capital investment which can be absorbed. The need for devoted and trained leaders is especially pressing for over a 1,000 million people in the vast rural areas of Asia and Africa and Latin America.

C. *Christian Responsibility in Relation to the State and Voluntary Groups*

Under this heading we discussed political freedom, the role of the government in economic life, and the need for more community and mutual responsibility in society as a whole and in its working units.

1. Because of the development of new patterns of economic life the state has had to assume new responsibilities in this field. Christian thinking about the role of the state must be reviewed at many points. Christians should be suspicious of abstract statements and generalizations, because the actual effectiveness and field of action of the state varies so greatly from country

to country. In thinking about criteria for state intervention the Christian must keep in mind the following :

a) The degree of government action depends on the particular circumstances of the time and the development of the nation in question.

b) The political and administrative competence of the government.

c) The effectiveness of bureaucracy in communication and its maintenance of flexibility and initiative.

It is now more generally recognized that only government is able to provide security in a number of fields. Yet we must remain aware of the danger of too much security. Also experience has shown that new forms of government action can be developed which will combine government responsibility with a spirit of enterprise. The problem is to know where are the limits of state intervention in concrete situations. A fundamental way of guarding against totalitarian dangers is to encourage the functioning of groups such as the university, the private corporation, the trade union and many other voluntary organizations between the individual and the state.

2. The group vigorously discussed the question of the Christian witness in the situation of a communist state. Here there were two main points of view expressed :

a) The communist state by definition representing the ideologizing of the political function and the complete subjection of the human spirit has to be resisted. The Christian must say a clear "No" to the communist state before he can begin to recognize the positive aspects within the communist achievement.

It was, however, recognized that even the most severe totalitatian systems are rarely so efficient or effective that they entirely exclude "human breathing space", and there are areas of personal responsibility which are sometimes very considerable.

b) The communist state must be seen in the light of historical development. In some countries and with regard to various areas of life, one can say that such a state has brought improvements to the preceding situation. This point of view emphasized that there may be considerable areas of personal responsibility in communist

systems and the Christian must work to enlarge the area of freedom through "gradual and slow" reform, especially in situations such as those in Eastern Europe today.

3. The group also discussed the problem of responsible action in the diverse groups which make up modern society. There was general agreement in welcoming the development of many diverse centres of power and responsibility which form the basis of the pluralistic structure of many societies today. However, such groups always incur the danger of becoming irresponsible sectional pressure groups. Examples were given of how this danger may be mitigated or avoided, but there is no obvious and universally applicable way of ensuring that this will happen.

D. *The Worker and Modern Industrial Problems in Relation to the Church*

The discussions of the group were concerned in detail with the question : what is the role of the workers in a responsible society and how can it be strengthened ? In connection with this question the group considered what other tasks and problems have priority in modern industrial society.

1. *The situation today*

The group agreed that in spite of rising standards of living among the workers, they often do not have full confidence in the social order. Whether the standard of living rises or not, it is decisive that the workers should be convinced that the present order of society does not merely serve the privileges of a minority. It was agreed further that the tendency in the churches to break away from their middle class prejudices and to show solidarity with the workers in the industrial world had not yet gone far enough.

There was no time for the group to discuss thoroughly the strong tendency for men to become simply the tools of production, a tendency which is found not only among workers but also among other classes of employees including those with academic training.

2. *The task of the Church in this situation* (especially the task of the layman)

The discussion went along the following lines :

a) It is not a satisfactory Christian view to want to improve human relations in industry simply in order to improve pro-

duction. The question of what it means to be human is one of the most pressing questions involved in all the concrete decisions that have to be taken in the industrial order. This question must be answered by the Church not only by what it says but by what it does through the effort of Christian laymen in industry to make the economic order as just as possible.

b) The situation in the industrial world is such that it would be naive to under-estimate the differences between various groups. The Church, while opposing violence by employers and employees, should avoid preaching any form of cheap social pacifism. Open injustice can often be dealt with only in sharp conflict, for example, in strikes. The Church should, by its example, do two things : first in its own life and organization it should encourage consultation and fellowship between different groups and classes of society. On the other hand, its members need to encourage responsible cooperation between different groups in industry. Modern society requires the development of institutions in which organized employers, workers, and consumers work together, to serve the common needs of all.

c) Important as work is both to the individual and society, the tendency to idolize work as such present in the East and in the West must be resisted by the Church. Technology is increasingly making possible time for leisure which man must put to creative use. Leisure time must be free of the mechanization and impersonality of modern work, and its rhythm must be different from that of work. Because of the importance of this, the building of dwellings for families must make room for this kind of leisure need, which makes the methods used in town planning particularly important.

E. *The Farmer and Problems of Rural Population in a Changing Society*

Nearly everywhere economic development demands and is accompanied by reduction of the number of people engaged in agriculture. These changes place serious tensions upon the agricultural economy and create problems for rural people which must be of concern to the Church.

Historically, peasants and farmers have frequently been the victims of poverty, ignorance and exploitation. This is still the case among many millions of the world's population. Even in economically developed countries where agriculture has been

modernized and farm population drastically reduced, farmers are frequently under severe economic pressure.

The following elements of Christian responsibility were mentioned in the discussion in respect to the agricultural sector of the economy :

1. Society, which depends upon farmers for most of its supply of basic food and fibre, has a responsibility to develop those social and economic institutions which will make it possible for farmers to produce efficiently and adequately for the meeting of human need. This includes land tenure arrangements, technical developments, credit institutions, and cooperative associations.

2. Farmers have a responsibility to apply their labour, their skills and their land diligently and conscientiously to the production of foods and fibres, which are needed to meet the legitimate physical needs of mankind.

3. Unregulated market prices tend to be unfavourable to farmers whenever they are effective in producing abundance. Therefore, Christian responsibility may, on occasion, require action by governments to protect the levels of living of farm people and to aid in necessary agricultural readjustments.

4. It is not satisfactory to encourage full and abundant agricultural production only to see the product piled up as undistributed and embarrassing surpluses in the presence of hungry and naked people. A major aim of a dynamic economy, both nationally and internationally, and a Christian responsibility, must be to open the channels of trade and raise general levels of consumer purchasing power in ways that will make potential abundance more readily available to all God's children.

5. It is important to recognize the international effects of large stocks piles of agricultural goods. They tend to act as severe depressants on the prices of farm products. Christians should favour and work for international commodity agreements as a means of promoting economic stability and international order.

In plenary session, the following points were made about the statement of Group II.

A speaker spoke to the sentence in the report in which it is stated that "The communist state by definition... has to be resisted", and inquired whether the meaning was clear. Chris-

tians ought to resist, by their witness and their action, the attempt to make of the political function of the state an ideology. Each state, including the communist state, is tempted in greater or lesser degree to pervert the task of ordering the state. For example, it is the task of the state to proclaim justice (see Romans 13), to punish the evil and to protect the good. That is the divine command to the state and divine task for the statesman. The danger is however always present, as is shown quite clearly in the story of the Passion, that holders of an ideology misuse the administration of justice as a result of their fanaticism. Pilate first of all stood for the true task of the state over against the Jewish ideologists, and finally capitulated before them. Christian resistance in word and suffering has its place here. The speaker argued therefore that the Christian should not say "no" to the communist state but within the communist state he should resist, in a true Christian way, at every point where political activities were falsified by communist ideology, and whereby justice was turned into injustice, and freedom into tyranny. The present formulation is not helpful for our fellow-Christians from Eastern Europe — first of all because it is not Biblical. If we are concerned lest the churches in Eastern Europe are unable to be sufficiently vigilant towards the communist threat to the Church and its faith we do not help them by recommending as an alternative that they answer their state with such an absolute "No". We must not mistake the ideology of communism with the reality of the communistic state. The Marxist ideologists desire that all political activities be based on and be used for the growth of Marxism. But there are many points where it will be found that the communist leaders serve the will of God in performing state functions even acting contrary to their ideologies without intending to do so. It would not be good to say "No" to the communist regime either. The word is far too unclear. We should limit ourselves to a firm and clear "No" to the ideologizing of state functions, and to the exercise of this "No" even when it may be risky, and remind the state of its actual functions. We have the good news that God will not take away His hands from this earth and that although the "mystery of iniquity" (2 Thess. 2) is already felt, God will prevent the state from being changed into a state of evil. If the anti-Christ who is already working secretly becomes apparent then Christ will come to destroy him with His word.

A second speaker held to the opposite view. It is not possible to resist only in a single concrete case. For example in

the liquidation of the big estates, the courts must judge according to laws which are unjust in their present form and these unjust laws are unjust because they are based on a pattern of class ideology. That is why it is necessary to resist not only the ideology but also the laws and measures which are based on it. The document could not explain in detail how this resistance would have to be carried out. That is why the word "No" was put in inverted commas. This resistance is not of a revolutionary kind, but rather a spiritual resistance born out of suffering. Adolf Hitler's government was an authority in the sense of Romans 13, just as much as the government in the East Zone of Germany, but we owe these governments our Christian witness (marytria). That is why we must resist.

Other speakers rose to affirm both of these views. The chairman noted that this discussion was not ended and would continue ; and the statement as it stood in the report was not the last word on the question, rather it reflected the discussion during the meetings.

Mr. Charles Taft of the U.S.A. said that the report was a very good document and he noted that the section on agricultural problems marked the first time this subject had been given proper attention in an ecumenical document on social questions. He was however not entirely pleased with the section on "The Worker and Modern Industrial Problems in Relation to the Church". This section as it stands refers to the situation in a particular area and reflects the problems of that area. It does not represent the situation in the U.S.A.

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